

# FORWARD

## SHA'AR ZAHAV

## שער זהב

### בא 5739 AUG 1979

The following press release was received from the Society for the Protection of Personal Rights in Israel.

Tel Aviv, July 25, 1979

A delegation from the International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews, representing, their member congregations and organizations from twelve countries (Australia, Bermuda, Canada, England, France, Germany, Holland, Israel, Mexico, Portugal, South Africa, and the United States) gathered this morning in Lahav to dedicate the woodland of 3,000 trees which they have planted through the Jewish National Fund.

Only 36 hours before the dedication ceremony, for which most of the members had already traveled thousands of miles, the J.N.F. changed its mind and announced its cancellation. Without explanation, the J.N.F. attempted to refund the \$9,000.00 which had already been used for reforestation. The delegation refused to accept this refund, referring to the Halacha (Talmudic Law) which calls upon all Jews to plant trees in Israel. A spokesperson for the delegation called the J.N.F. action "contrary to the spirit to Zionism, prejudiced, and anti-Torah. Such action would sooner be expected from the Khomeini regime in Iran than from a usually responsible Jewish Zionist agency." Only last week, the J.N.F. presented the conference with a commemorative plaque in recognition of its donation, and inscribed it:



"A woodland of 3,000 trees planted by the International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Jews honoring the countless Homosexual Men and Women in the Galut and Israel who gave of themselves to build and defend the land of Israel, and who are struggling to bring it security, Torah, Ahavat Am Yisrael, and Eretz Yisrael to Jews everywhere.

It was at the 1977 annual conference that the delegates voted to embark on a project to plant a woodland of 2,500 trees in Israel. This week the delegation, which came to attend the dedication of its 3,000 tree woodland, included Henry Mendleson of New York City. Mr. Mendelson, a man in his late 60's, is dying of cancer and confined to a wheelchair. He risked the difficult trip, because his final wish is to see the dedication of his trees in Israel. Many other members borrowed money, invested their savings and rearranged other commitments to be able to attend the J.N.F. dedication ceremony.

Representatives unanimously decided that the dedication was so important, that if the J.N.F. would not perform the ceremony as promised, the delegation would hold its own to dedicate the trees which it has planted. The ceremony took place this morning at Lahav forest at 11:00 a.m.

## high holy days

It is not too early to start looking forward to the High Holy Days. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav will be holding Services for Rosh Hashana on Friday evening, September 21 and on Saturday morning September 22. Yom Kippur Services are on Sunday evening, September 30 and Monday morning October 01. Services will be at the Jewish Community Center, California at Presidio in San Francisco. Please keep these dates open. More information will be in the next edition of the FORWARD.



## off the (eastern) wall

Last month, I wrote a retrospective article, noting among other things, that in our two years, we've come a long way and have many accomplishments to our credit--but there's much we should be doing that hasn't yet been done.

Our continuing and regular religious activity, our regular Shabbat and the various special holiday services can be said to represent the "backbone" of Sha'ar Zahav. However, in trying to achieve our goal of creating a true Gay Jewish community, regular worship services aren't enough. An area in which we've been deficient has been the lack of a really active social program. This is true for most synagogues but is especially important to us because so many other of the "social alternatives" in the gay/lesbian community leave much to be desired.

You might ask, if a social program is so important, why doesn't Sha'ar Zahav ~~do~~ something about it? Why don't we have dances? Why don't we have parties? Why do almost all of our activities take place on Friday nights? I think what it really comes down to is that Sha'ar Zahav is basically a volunteer organization, and if there are no volunteers for a specific kind of activity, it doesn't get done.

In the last few months, there have been two social events, our annual Lag Ba'Omer picnic on Angel Island and a very successful Pool Party for members and their guests at Bernard's home on the side of Mt. Tamalpais. (Incidentally, this is a good opportunity to thank Bernard for having made his home available to us for a delightful afternoon.) Both of these events required a certain amount of planning; thanks to those members who, in addition to their usual duties for Sha'ar Zahav, helped coordinate these events.

While in no way denigrating these activities, and while recognizing that we have at least two more social events that are being planned for the coming months by Aryae and Allen (a tour to Jewish sites in the Gold Rush Country) and Rob (an Evening with the Divine Miss M), we really need an active Social Committee function, which we don't have now, to plan a coordinated social program. Those of you who are interested in helping us develop a continuing, comprehensive, imaginative and varied social program are very welcome to speak to me or any other Va'ad member.



Elsewhere in this issue of the FORWARD:

Our membership chairperson, Bill Goldstein, has written about the kind of Congregation into which we hope the Sha'ar Zahav will develop a community of people of different classes and backgrounds, a synagogue which breaks down the traditional sex-role pattern that has existed for so long in Judaism. On behalf of Sha'ar Zahav's leadership in a collective sense, I sincerely endorse Bill's comments.

Daniel Chesir  
Co-Leader

Beginning with this issue, the newsletter will include excerpts from the most recent va'ad meeting. The va'ad, consisting of the four officers, nine committee chairs and the rabbi, meets once a month. These meetings are open to the membership. If you are interested in attending a meeting, contact me or any member of the va'ad for specific date, time and place.

As congregational recorder, one of my duties is to function as historian. At the present time, the official Sha'ar Zahav archives consists of a large cardboard box filled to overflowing with assorted papers, pictures and yellowing copies of the Advocate. However, this is soon to change. If you are in possession of any articles, photographs or other materials which you feel will enrich our archives, and document our synagogue history, please let me know. Contact me at services or by calling 863-1998.

Shalom,  
Steven Fritsch Rudser



# EVERYBODY'S GOING!

jogging



The Sha'ar Zahav runners will meet  
Sunday, August 19  
Sunday September 2,  
Sunday September 16,

Meeting time is 10:00 AM at the Boat House at Stow lake in Golden Gate Park. Participation has been increasing for each run and we hope you, too, decide to do something good for your body. Remember, jogging experience is not necessary, and our runs are open to all members, non-members, friends and family. Call Ron Lezell (552-6766), or Ellis Jacobs (552-6976) for directions to Stow Lake. See you there.

## program

On August 17, after services, Debbi Goodman of the Jewish Family Services will discuss the Senior Outreach Program, show a film, and coordinate Sha'ar Zahav participation in this important and rewarding project



# va'ad meeting

Va'ad meeting of July 1, 1979.

The minutes were read and approved. Daniel welcomed David Gass, a new member of the va'ad. The present va'ad consists of: co-leader (male) Daniel Chesir, co-leader (female) vacant, treasurer Ron Lezell, recorder Steven Fritsch Rudser, building Bob Ehremberg, education-vacant, finance Tom Rothgiesser, membership Bill Boldstein, oneg David Gass, outreach Mike Zimmerman, program Sam Thal, newsletter Ellis Jacobs, ritual vacant.

Allen reported that he is attempting to broaden outreach by attending meetings in the community. He is presently involved with several committees attempting to sensitize the police to minority issues. Allen has been elected treasurer of the Committee of Religion and the Homosexual. Allen and Rev. Jim Dykes, pastor of the MCC hope to establish a national gay clergy group. Rev. Brita Gill, of the First Congregational Church, has expressed an interest in addressing the congregation on religion and women's issues.

Daniel discussed the problem of planning social activities for the congregation since there is no social committee. It was decided to search for a person to fill this role. David and Allen agreed to do some investigative work on several possible functions.

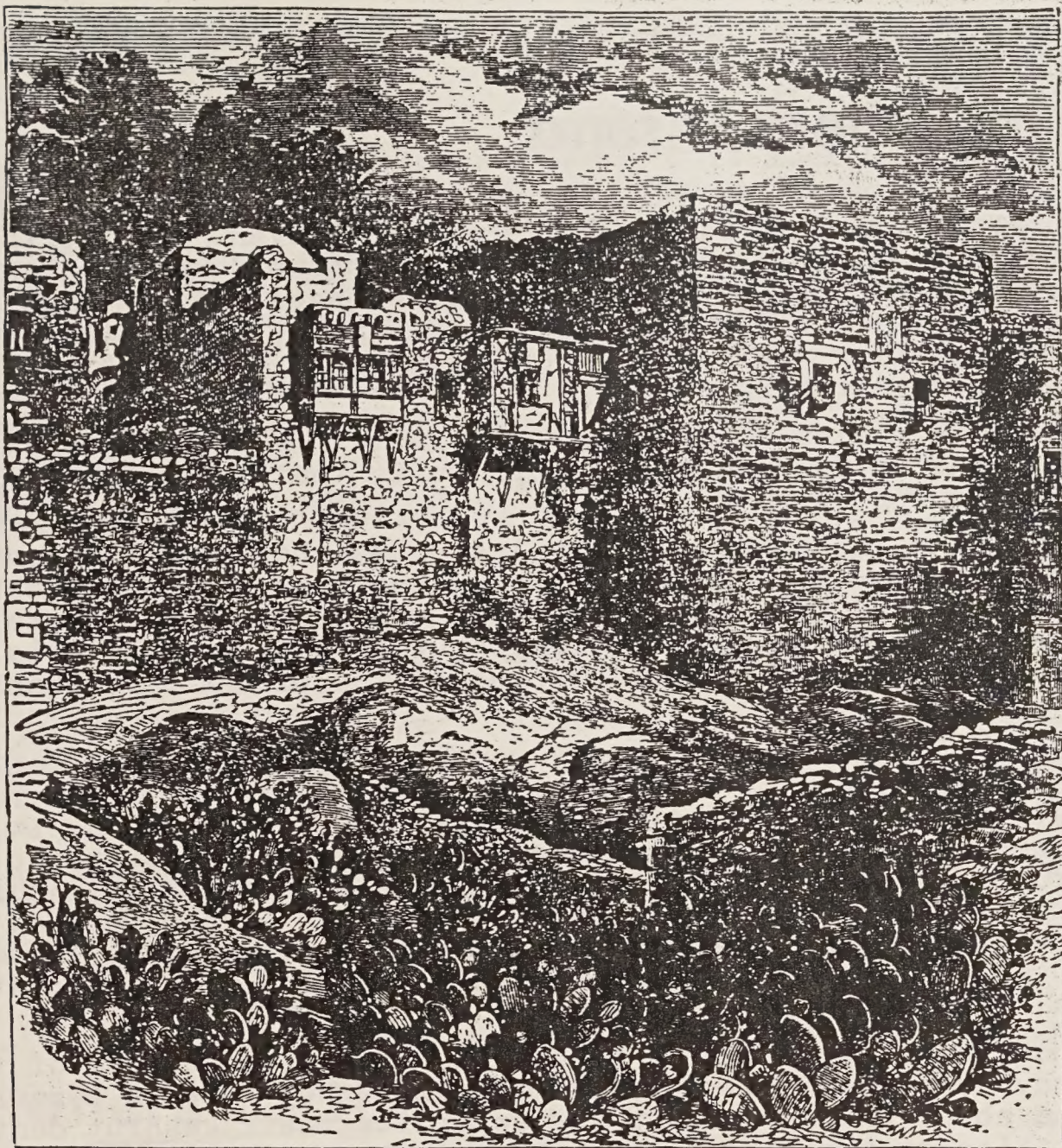
Lou Green is now printing the newsletter for us very inexpensively. Birthdays and Yahrts are now listed. We are presently using the new computer labels.

It was MS&P that Tal'or Bar-Shank be the official delegate of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav at the conference. Tal'or was instructed that we would be willing to sponsor the convention in 1980 only if no other group was willing.

It was MS&P that we establish candidates night for individuals running for specific offices, not more than twice a month. The speeches will occur between services and oneg, time depending upon how many speakers are present. Any candidate wishing to speak will be expected to be present for the entire service. It was MS&P that we would not solicit candidates to speak.

The next meeting will take place on August 5, from 4pm to 7pm at David Gass' home.





WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

## wanted

People interested in arranging or working on social functions such as dances, trips, parties, etc. for our congregation. Please call our answering service at 626-3131 and leave a message or contact any Va'ad member at services.



## from where i stand

Recently we received information in the mail of the attempt by rabbinical authorities in Israel to prevent the fourth international conference of gay and lesbian Jews from taking place. According to the information we received, the motivation for this action came from rabbis here in the states who were imploring their Israeli colleagues to keep this conference from happening.

The whole series of circumstances leaves me a little sickened, and it is troubling enough to me that I want to share my discomfort with you.

First, the information I have indicates that trouble first surfaced when the kibbutz on which the conference was to be held was told that if they allowed the conference to take place, they would lose their kashrut certificate. This is clear commercial blackmail by the office of the Chief Rabbinate.

In theory, this body may only revoke the license of a certified person, group, or production facility if it is determined that they are in violation of Jewish law. In this case it is transparently obvious that the licensing agency was under instruction to revoke the license of the kibbutz candy manufactory simply because the kibbutz itself had agreed to host a convention whose delegates were deemed undesirable. In fact, no violation of Jewish law (or any other law, for that matter) was involved or even contemplated!

Since the kibbutz relies so heavily on the production of this candy as a means of supporting itself, they were in a real bind about whether or not to jeopardize their kashrut certification by agreeing to host the conference despite the threatened revocation. They and the conference planners went back and forth on the issue until it was ultimately decided that the place and format would have to be changed for the protection of all.

Second, my reaction to this goes beyond the revulsion which we all feel when this sort of economic pressure is used under the guise of theology. Quite simply, the Orthodox are using this fraudulent means to repress people whom they don't like, whom they can't control, and who won't go away. This reprehensible behavior is so repugnant to me mostly because it comes from those "holier-than-thou" Orthodox Jews who are abusing the very principles of Judaism that they claim to glorify in a typical effort to deny basic human rights (in this case, of assembly) to their own kinfolk.



It is this sort of thing which makes it much harder to remain steadfast in commitment to Judaism, especially when so many of us hold on to our Judaism so tenuously anyway. And it is just this sort of behavior on the part of the Orthodox which turns their brand of Judaism into a very exclusive social club open only to like-minded individuals with a very limited range of interests and an extremely narrow range of acceptance of individual differences.

The one extremely bright side of this whole disgraceful experience is that, even in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds, the Israeli and New York conference planners decided to "damn the torpedoes" and to go ahead with the conference, although they were under great duress. Their tenacity and determination are to be lauded; regardless of the way the conference takes shape and comes off, and regardless of the efforts made by others to insure our "defeat and misery", I am confident that they in Israel and others everywhere will know that we are here, that we are, in fact, everywhere, and that, indeed, our time has come.

## letters to the editor

Not only am I writing to tell you my address for the summer, but also to tell you how much the Jewish Gaily FORWARD has meant to me. I am proud of my Jewishness and receiving the FORWARD gives me validation as a gay Jew. I'll try to send a contribution as soon as I can. At MSU, where I go to school, the gay Jews are either really closeted and immerse themselves in the straight Jewish crowd cruising the disco on occasion or else they're totally into the gay scene and (do not care) about being Jewish. It's good to know there are others who are comfortable with both. Thank you and shalom, Love, JDN



## A BUBBA MAYSA\* ABOUT KING TUT

By Dr Anthony Gardiner Beauregard Lowell IV

(All statements made in this article are the sole opinions of the author, not the congregation or the editor. All statements can be supported by documents, rumor, or personal body contact. Suits against the author are not advised as he is nearly penniless.)

Why can they not tell if Acton was the father, or the brother of King Tut? Why was so much done for a young king who ruled for so short a time? Why do the lists of Pharoahs exclude both Acton and Tut? Acton was the father, brother and LOVER of Tut! He wanted to give Egypt monotheism. He sought to free them from the shackles of priesthood. (source: the founder of Egyptology, Court, Count de Ghebellin, father only in a legal sense, as Egyptians married as babies)

But Acton and Tut are not the only great gays in history they have tried to hide from us. There were three great "All American Boys":

General Alexander Hamilton, A founding father, co-author of The Federalist Papers, co-framer of the Constitution, first Secretary of the Treasury, and even founder of the New York Post and Bronx Home News.

The Honorable James Buchanan, President of the United States, and His LOVER:

The Honorable William King, Vice-President of the United States

All around the world, gays and gay Jews have done much and there are many lists. I add another because I want to highlight the GREATEST and the GAYEST and above all those who have helped us by coming out.

### JEWISH GAY AND PROUD

Harvey Milk, First supervisor of a major American city to be and out front gay, Martyr.

Gertrude Stein, one of the first women to write a work of literart merit about her love by name.

George Gershwin, who endured much ridicule and agony for his courage

Rabbi Allen Bennett, the first out-front gay rabbi.

Alan Ginsberg, the poet of Howl, pioneer forefather of all hippies and one who always helps his twin people.

\* An old wives tale



## JUST GAY AND PROUD

Sir Benjamin Britten, unashamed even though many would never speak to him again, and one club asked him to leave

W. H. Auden, a poet, a reader of poems, he never hesitated to speak out for gay rights.

Socrates, he gave his life in our cause

Frederick Rolfe Baron Corvo, the fact that he died in great poverty in Venice only adds to the luster of this fine dramatist whose "Hadrian" was so successfully revived here.

Lorca, brave on so many fronts, perhaps the greatest writer of modern Spain.

## GAYS OF WHOM I AM THE MOST ASHAMED

J. Edgar Hoover

Senator Joseph McCarthy

Cardinal Spellman

(few list the negative, lets face it, not all notable gays are good!)

The world is much richer for these women and men, all gays. If they did not speak out how many of us would have been out always and everywhere.

Goethe, Virgil, Melville, Milton, Sir Isaac Newton, Sir Francis Bacon, Nijinsky, Hans Christian Andersen, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Ravel, Cellini, Rodin, Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, Pope John XXII, Pope Joan, Pope Benedict X, Pope Paul VI, Pope Sextus IV, Tennyson, Barrie, Colette, Brendan Behan, Dag Hammerskjold, Strindberg, Erasmus, Aristotle, Lord John Maynard Keynes, Cardinal Newman, Valesquez, Caravaggio, Verrochio, William Inge, Provst, Gide, Wilde (but who could believe him or not, the court did not).

Hart Crane, Samuel Butler, Henry James, Julius Ceasar Napoleon, Queen Christina, Virginia Woolf, Emily Dickinson, James Dean, Cole Porter, Montgomery Clift, Sir Arthur Sullivan, Rimbaud, Verlaine, Cocteau, Genet, Capote, Stephen Collins Foster, Maugham, Coward, Horage Walpole, Lord Byron, Flaubert, Millay, Pasolin, Carson McCullers, Edna Millay, Amy Lowell Gore Vidal, Tennessee Williams, Samuel Butler.

Alexander Woolcott, Algernon Charles Swinburne, Willa Cather, Saint Augustine, Peter the Great, Frederick the Great, Edward VIII, Claudius, Trajan, Crown Prince Charles of England, Louis XIII, Louis XVIII, William II, George II, Richard II, Sulieman the Magnificent, Ram Dass (Dr. Richard Alpert), and none will convince me otherwise: DAVID, King of Israel.



# membership

On June 18th, the Membership Committee met and elected me as Chair, Leila Raim as coordinator for women's membership, Steven Levine as coordinator of dues and membership financial affairs, and Todd Von Daniken as a back-up and support person for the Committee. Up to that date, the Committee had been inactive for several months since the resignation of its Chair. Ron Lezell had been doing a fine job in taking over the duties of the Committee for which we, at this time, would like to thank him.

And now, approaching the upcoming High Holy Days, and plans and hopes for increased membership with special outreach to women, we rule up our sleeves and start the very important task of increasing our membership.

On July 20th, Rabbi Alan Bennett gave a sermon speaking exclusively on the importance of expanding our ranks with new members could do for us, and most importantly what we can do for and what we have to offer those who choose to join us. I'll not repeat his statements nor expand on them, but I do make the comment that those who heard the sermon were extremely inspired by what he said. Inspired enough to the point that we gained 6 new members by the end of the evening.

The Committee would like to welcome those and other new members to the Synagogue and enumerate a few of its goals and plans. As policy, we will be having small social get togethers which will serve as a form of orientation to the congregation where new and prospective members can feel comfortable in an informal setting, asking questions about Sha'ar Zahav and giving us input as to what they would like to see in the Congregation in the form of social and religious interaction; what they want from Sha'ar Zahav and what they can and would like to contribute. Look for the first of these socials in the near future to be announced in the FORWARD and at services.

As many people are aware, several months ago Sha'ar Zahav suffered the trauma of the breaking away of a segment of members, many of them women. At the time of this split, we were accused of being male-oriented sexist organization. I personally will guaranty that this is not true. Yes, Sha'ar Zahav does have a few persons with some sexist ideas and attitudes. But they are not reflective of the Congregation. And as the Congregation is endeavoring to educate and enlighten these attitudes, so too is the Membership Committee dedicated to seek out new members with the assurance that we are non-oppressive to any political, gender, or age group, and that the Congregation is neither sexist nor male-oriented in its thinking and out-



reach.

I, and the Membership Committee, look forward to hearing your ideas not only for increasing membership, but, also, for improving the quality of what Sha'ar Zahav can do for you. My phone number is 552-5573, and I am open to hearing from you at any time.

Shalom,

Bill Goldstein

## donations

Thanks to the following for their gifts to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav:

Daniel Breen  
Bob Brown  
Anthony Gardiner Lowell  
Mr. and Mrs. Manber  
MTC-Mishpocheh  
Sam Thal  
Nathan Weinstein

If you would like to donate to the congregation in honor of an event (a new residence, car, etc) or a person (a new partner, etc) or in the memory of someone, such contribution will be graciously accepted by Sha'ar Zahav. Contribution in any amount (\$2.00 minimum) will be most welcome. If you would like your contribution not acknowledged in the FORWARD, please note that on your check.

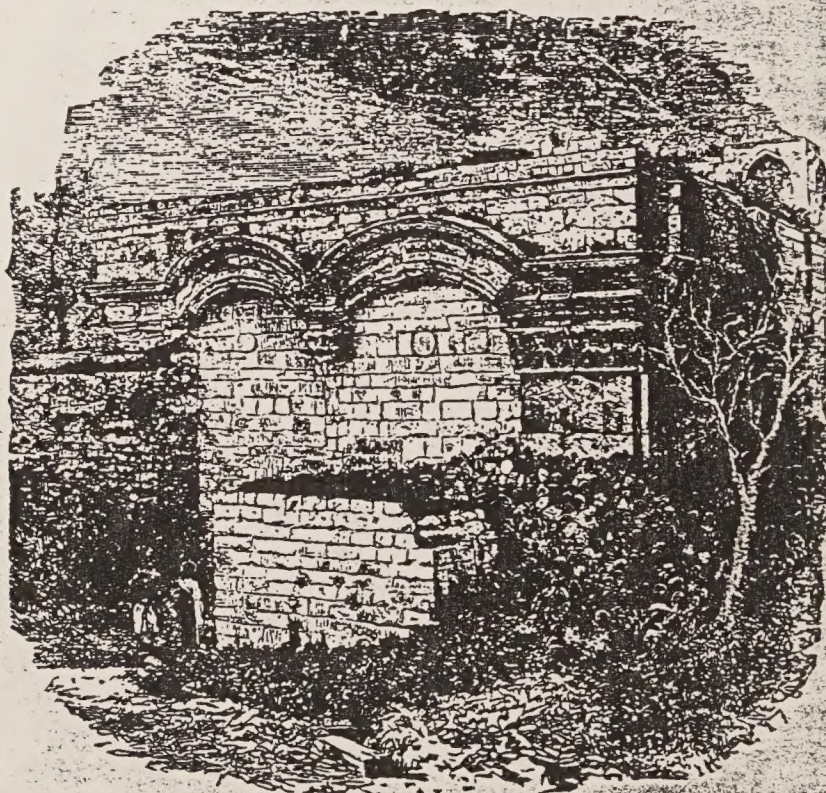


## Jewish Living

We recently received a mailing from a magazine called Jewish Living, making their publication available to us. They requested a copy of our membership roster so that they could send each of our members their publicity. Since we are not at a stage where we would release our roster -- to anyone -- we would like to advise our members of this offer, and to let you know that if you would like to learn more about this new magazine, you can write to Jewish Living, 122 East 42nd Street, New York, New York, 10017.

## reminder

Just a reminder, if you have recently moved or, more importantly, are planning to move, please send a change of address card to our Congregation at P.O. Box 5640, San Francisco 94101 right away. Otherwise it costs us 25¢ to get your change of address from the Post Office.



THE GOLDEN GATE



## services

|           |                                    |
|-----------|------------------------------------|
| August 10 | Mike Zimmerman                     |
| August 17 | Rob Montague                       |
| August 24 | Anthony Gardiner Beauregard Lowell |
| August 31 | Rabbi Allen Bennett                |
| Septem 7  | Tony Moore                         |

## yahrzeits

|          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| August 2 | I. A. Barnett |
|----------|---------------|

## birthdays

|           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| August 8  | David Klein           |
| August 8  | Paul Olshansky        |
| August 13 | Steven Fritsch Rudser |
| August 16 | Steve Cain            |
| August 22 | Robert Schoen         |

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav mourns the loss of its friend  
Henry Metz



## calendar of events

- August 10      Evening Services at 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Balak, Num 22:2-25:9  
Prophetic reading, Micah 5:6-6:8
- August 17      Evening Services at 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Re'eh, Deut. 11:26-16:17  
Prophetic reading, Isaiah 54:11-55:5.
- August 24      Evening Services at 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Shofetim, Deut. 16:18-21:9  
Prophetic reading, Isaiah 51:12-52:12.
- August 31      Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Ki-Tetze Duet. 21:10-25:19  
Prophetic reading, Isaiah 54:10.
- September 7    Evening Services 8:00 p.m.  
Torah portion, Ki-Tavo, Deut, 26:1-29:8  
Prophetic reading, Isaiah 60:1-22.

All Services held at the Jewish Community Center, 3200 California Street at Presido.

**SHA'AR ZAHAV**

THE CONGREGATION OF THE GOLDEN GATE

Box 5640

San Francisco, CA 94101

(415) 626-3131

Reaching out to the Gay Community of the San Francisco Bay Area